

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of scheduling a plurality of patients and a plurality of employees in a health care environment, wherein at least two patients receive treatment during a predetermined time period, said scheduling method comprising:

for each patient, evaluating patient care requirements, wherein the patient care requirements correspond to actual employee time requirements necessary to satisfy the patient care requirements and evaluating employee time requirements necessary to satisfy non-patient care activities;

displaying a plurality of patient schedules in relation to time to provide a visual indication of the patient care requirements for each interval;

in response to the patient care requirement evaluation and the non-patient care requirement evaluation, adjusting scheduling time of at least one patient to distribute the corresponding employee time requirements throughout a predetermined time period, wherein the predetermined time period is a day; [[and]]

dividing the day into intervals, wherein each interval is less than an hour;

in evaluating the patient care requirements, determining the patient care requirements on a per-interval basis;

scheduling employees in response to the distributed employee time requirements, wherein scheduling employees comprises:

(i) counting employees at a fractional number based at least upon the employees' training resulting in scheduling employees in non-whole number increments;
and

(ii) rounding up a total amount of employees scheduled when a determination by the scheduling module results in a fractional number of employees needed to address the needs of the plurality of patients; and

displaying employee shift information in relation to time to provide a visual indication of scheduled employee information in relation to scheduled patient information.

2-3 (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in 1 wherein a plurality of job types for an employee are predetermined, each job type having a different patient care capability value associated with each job type and wherein the method further comprises:

scheduling shifts of employees based on job type;
scheduling employees based on scheduled job type; and
wherein the patient care capability value is averaged over an entire shift.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) A method as defined in claim 1 wherein each employee has a predetermined patient care capability and wherein the method further comprises scheduling employees in relation to patient care capability.

7. (Original) A method as defined in claim 6 wherein the patient care capability relates to indirect and direct patient care activities.

8. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim 7 wherein each employee further has a predetermined non-patient care capability relating to performing non-patient care activities, and wherein the method further comprises:

calculating a staff efficiency [[valued]] value based on scheduled activities, wherein the activities relate to patient care and non-patient care activities; and
displaying the staff efficiency value.

9-11 (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in claim [[11]] 1 further comprising:

calculating a total value of employee time for each interval;
displaying the calculated employee values;
comparing patient requirement values and employee values for each interval to determine efficiency.

13-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently Amended) A method of scheduling a plurality of patients and a plurality of employees as defined in claim 1, further comprising:

~~graphical user interface for a computer system, the graphical user interface having a display module for displaying information, said graphical user interface comprising:~~

displaying [[a]] patient schedule information in a patient schedule portion, the patient schedule portion logically divided into intervals and displaying patient schedule information related to the intervals;

displaying employee schedule information in an employee schedule portion logically divided into intervals, wherein the intervals for the patient schedule portion correspond to the intervals for the employee information portion; and

calculating temporary and permanent patient care requirements and employee capabilities; and

displaying a calculation display area for displaying calculated values within each interval, the calculated values relating to temporary or permanent patient care requirements and employee capabilities for each interval based on the employee's direct care, indirect care and non-patient care tasks during the time interval, whereby the calculation display area provides efficiency information.

26. (Canceled)